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**SCAG PRESENTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
TO STATE LEGISLATIVE FORUM**

**SCAG's Executive Director Details Operation Jumpstart Initiative
To Joint Legislative Forum on Economic Development**

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LOS ANGELES – The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) presented state legislative leaders with a unique initiative centered around critical transportation infrastructure investments as a catalyst to spur economic development and job growth throughout Southern California. The SCAG initiative, known as “Operation Jumpstart,” was presented to a joint forum of the Assembly Select Committee on Jobs, Economic Development and the Economy and the Select Committee on Adult Education, chaired by Assemblyman Mark Ridley-Thomas.

In his presentation to the Joint Forum, SCAG Executive Director Mark Pisano cited the findings of the agency’s 2003 State of the Region report released in January, as well as its projections for population growth in Southern California over the next 20 years, as the primary rationales for the initiative. More specifically, increasing traffic congestion, worsening air quality and a long-term decline in personal income resulting from the loss of higher-paying manufacturing jobs were noted as critical challenges facing Southern California that must be addressed in the short-term. As a potential solution, Pisano noted that Southern California is uniquely positioned to become the world’s pre-eminent center for international trade and commerce if critical investments in the region’s road and rail infrastructure.

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“The region has progressed rapidly to become a leader of the logistics industry, but as it stands, this industry has the potential to choke our transportation infrastructure and further pollute our air,” said Pisano. “If we make the investments we need to support our goods movement infrastructure, it will ultimately support our economy and our quality of life as we move forward.”

SCAG originally unveiled Operation Jumpstart in June 2003 as a means of sustaining economic growth in Southern California in the coming decades. The initiative would involve a series of public/private partnerships to accelerate investments in both road and rail capacity on a series of key corridors throughout Southern California. Such an effort would not only create tens of thousands of high-paying jobs in the short-term, it would also position the region to handle the exponential growth in trade volume projected over the next 20 years at the region’s seaports and airports.

By the year 2030, SCAG projects that container volume at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach – which already handle one-third of the nation’s container traffic – will double, while cargo volumes at airports throughout the region will triple. The region will also see its population growth by more than six million residents over that time. If implemented, Operation Jumpstart would create approximately 370,000 high-paying jobs in the short-term, infuse around \$13 billion into the regional economy, and sustain thousand of additional jobs in the long-term.

“Individually and collectively, the implementation of these projects would strengthen the region’s position as the nation’s foremost gateway for trade and the center of its logistics industry,” continued Pisano. “Although the long-term benefits of these improvements are critical to the future of our region, the shorter-term benefits are equally important to get our economy moving again.”

For more information about Operation Jumpstart, please visit the SCAG Web site at www.scag.ca.gov.